Fellowship in Prayer

"For a world united in prayer"

"O God, who has given to man the great yearning for goodness and for peace, pour into our hearts such great love for Thee, that the overflow may reach to all men everywhere--even unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Volume VII December, 1956 Number 6

OUR PURPOSE

"To promote the practice of prayer among *all* religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind."

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

22 E. 29th Street New York 16, N.Y.

Volume VII December, 1956 Number 6

Christmas Chimes

SOMETIMES men pause and listen to chimes playing. They may be high up in the air and concealed. Yet are they sweet, clear, and golden. Their melody suggests more than words can say. And do not our hearts, also, have a set of invisible chimes? . . . They are the Christmas Bells of the Soul . . . Too often silent and unheard, yet at Yule-tide, they are awakened to music. They are the Christmas Chimes that keep playing on and on in the Soul of Man. One is named Peace; one is Good-will; one is Faith; one is Hope; and lo! sometimes they all mysteriously melt into one strain. Then do they sweetly play the antique, angel-old tune of Love . . . May the Christmas Chimes be set a-playing in your own Heart, O Friend! As their music is contagious, it may steal into the hearts of your loved ones and friends and brothers the world around.

THE NETWORK OF THE LORD

By Adeline Hollister Veghte

Each life becomes woven into the pattern of its own network.

The deep need of millions now in sore distress throughout our world causes us to ask, "How can we adequately pray for deliverance, both physical and spiritual?" The following parable may help us to find the answer.

There is in Altadena, California, a double row of giant deodar trees. The seeds for these evergreens were brought many years ago from the foothills of the Himalaya Mountains in Northern India. This row of towering trees, a mile in length, reaching up toward the mountains, has been lighted at Christmas time for the past thirty-two years, and has become widely known as "The Mile of Christmas trees."

For weeks before the lights are turned on, workmen are engaged in wiring the trees, a gigantic task, requiring imagination as well as technical skill. As Christmas Eve approaches all is put in readiness. The wiring is completed, the multi-colored light bulbs are placed, and the extensive network of wires is attached to the one central line. All that is finally needed to complete the operation is the plugging of this main trunk line into the socket. On Christmas Eve, far from the mile of trees, an unknown hand, at the appointed hour, pushes the plug into its socket, and lo! a blaze of light instantly and simultaneously flashes from all the thousands of light bulbs on this tremendous network which lies hidden in the mile long row of trees.

It is as if a miracle had taken place. Yet the preparation for this miracle had taken much time, care, and patience.

Something similar to this takes place in human life.

All through our lives the hand of the Lord is moving us in and out through varying experiences, in many places, in wide reaches of the world, and among differing peoples. Each life thus becomes woven into the pattern of its own network, strung with its own lamps, each lamp being another human soul which we are permitted to touch—a potential disseminator of light.

Then when we, as the main trunk line, draw into the silence, and "plug into", or make contact with the source of light and power, out across our entire network flashes this spiritual light and power.

We may be far distant from the greater part of our network. We may not be consciously aware at the moment of the needs of any one particular soul who has thus become a part of our life long network.

Yet when in humility and trust we enter into God's presence and let ourselves as the main power line of that network plug directly into the source of power, then the flow and radiance of His Spirit are manifest in some way in the lives of all who are so linked with us. All along our entire network His Spirit works.

This may be part of what Jesus meant when He said to all whom the Father had given to Him— "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to the Father."

The life long networks of even a small group of people are beyond calculation. How great then is the reach of the combined network of a great company of praying, interceding souls, the interlacing, the overlaying, the many times encircling the globe.

May we let our God-given imagination ponder for a time on this tremendous potentiality which is ours in group intercession, and then know that when we go to the source of Life in believing prayer, His Spirit works the miracle.

* * *

EVERY PRAYER I PRAY IS BEARING FRUIT

NO PRAYER I utter is in vain. Every prayer I pray serves to draw the deep desires of my soul a little closer to manifestation. Even as the rays of the sun reach beneath the soil to radiate nourishment to the seed, so does every prayer I contemplate or speak activate the divine potential within me and cause it to unfold that much more toward expression.

Even though the good for which I pray is not yet visible, I am not discouraged. I know that the orderly unfoldment of divine ideas is always from within out, and that even now the inner foundation and framework of my heart's desires are being established.

With each new prayer the perfection in me is drawn closer to manifestation, so I am joyously patient and untiringly expectant.

Every prayer I pray is bearing fruit.

(Sent by Rev. F. J. Compson).

* * *

"LET THERE BE LIGHT"

By—

Harry Halsey Starrett

It is significant that Almighty God, in the very beginning, gave, as His first command— "LET THERE BE LIGHT". It clearly shows, He knew that nothing of an enduring nature could evolve out of darkness and that, if His creation was to be a success, in accordance with His intelligent and just plan, the first and most important thing was to turn on "THE LIGHT", which He did, by His Word.

Darkness symbolizes death; Light symbolizes Life Everlasting; darkness represents ignorance—the greatest obstacle in man's path to fulfillment; Light represents understanding—man's only hope of redemption— "I know that my Redeemer liveth." This Divine command later found expression in the words of the Master when He said— "I am the resurrection and the life."

Man, through the misuse of his God-given freewill, turned his back on "THE LIGHT" and walked in the darkness of his own shadow and in that darkness, he transgressed the laws of God, bringing upon the world the deplorable conditions rampant in the world today. Man's only hope and the only hope of the world is, therefore, for him to turn about, face and walk in "THE LIGHT", casting his shadow behind him; for it is only in "THE LIGHT OF TRUTH" that we find freedom— "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"— and it is only in freedom that we can fulfill our mission here on earth as Christ fulfilled His mission, in harmony with the Divine Plan, to the glory of God and to the good of man.

May this first and greatest command— "LET THERE BE LIGHT" reverberate from our souls back to God Who gave it as a prayer for deliverance from the darkness of ignorance, and may "THE LIGHT THAT LIGHTETH THE WORLD"—THE LIVING CHRIST—illumine our hearts and minds and lead us "In the paths of righteousness, for His name's sake", reflecting this "ETERNAL LIGHT" into the lives of our fellowmen whom we meet along life's highway. May this command of the Creator, which brought everything into being, echo and re-echo from the depths of our souls now and throughout all eternity.

* * *

GLORY

Have you ever heard the story
Of the man who showed the way
To light up the scene with glory,
Let life offer what it may?
Born, outside an inn, a stranger,
In a rude, rough cattle shed,
There he glorified a manger
Where, of straw, they made his bed!

As a lad, he knew hard labor,
But he never tried to shirk,
For he loved to serve a neighbor
And he gloried in his work!
When a man, he lived for others,
Walked with folks of humble birth,
Welcomed rich and poor as brothers,
Glorified all human worth!

Life was spent in teaching, healing,
Liberating souls from sin,
God's redeeming love revealing, -
Tasks like these he gloried in!
But his foes wreaked such disaster,
All his toil seemed total loss;
Crucified, he still was Master,
For he glorified the cross!

-- Ralph S. Thorn.

PRAYER AND CHRISTMAS

By Roy Wallace Thomas

The Christmas season brings many joyful thoughts to mind. Not least in significance is the fact that the child, whose birth we commemorate despite history's confusion regarding the exact day, became a man perfect in the understanding and experience of prayer.

Jesus, as did the child of every devout Jew, received his first lessons in prayer in the home. Like all children, he began his learning by the easy way of imitation. God gives children the gift of imitation in order that they may speed up learning in the face of tenderness of brain and lack of experience.

Jesus began by absorbing the good that was about him. Eminent scholars tell us that what we call "the Lord's Prayer" was not different from Jewish prayers in originality of thought. The difference was not in content but in form and method. Jewish prayers, Bultmann points out, usually began with a number of sonorous assertions, as, "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, God most High, Creator of heaven and earth, our shield and the shield of our fathers." Jesus began his model prayer with the simple address, "Father".

The main characteristic of the Lord's Prayer is its brevity and simplicity. It is the longest of the prayers of Jesus presented by Matthew, Mark and Luke. His other prayers in the Synoptics are literally sentence prayers. The long prayer in the fourth Gospel we will mention later.

The key to Jesus' brevity and simplicity in praying lay in his keeping "prayed up-to-date". There is point in the old story of the younger preacher and the bishop who happened to be lodged by their host in the same room. You remember that the young man, upon retiring, knelt ostentatiously and engaged in a long but silent prayer. He was horrified to see the bishop kneel for only a few moments. The young man's outraged sense of piety forced him to remonstrate. The bishop replied drily, "I keep prayed up-to-date".

The healthy-minded Christian can keep prayed up-to-date, but sick souls will find it more difficult. And in times of crisis longer prayers may be required in the soul's agony over conflict. The author of the Gospel according to John gives evidence that in the trying hours of preparation for the final crisis Jesus may have used a long

prayer. The author of John wrote out the prayer many, many years after it was uttered, and he uses his own language rather than the style of Jesus as it appears in the Synoptics. This long prayer, however, is divinely sublime and important. The churches dare not ignore it.

In the tragic hours in Gethsemane before his arrest, Jesus' effectual prayer, thrice repeated, was very concise: "Not my will, but thine, be done." It is absolute commitment that counts in effective prayer. Long prayers are tricky for the average man because he is likely to find himself slyly bossing God all over the cosmic ranch, and unloading a mass of details that a God of full intelligence would know in the first place. This is evident from a study of most long printed prayers, and from an honest appraisal of most long public prayers. The use of many words tends to make fuzzy the one thing that is true prayer.

Jesus was very clear on this matter. "In praying," he said, "do not heap up empty phrases as the gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him" (Matthew 6:7,8). Then followed his terse, model prayer, which we all love and use. Kagawa is right: expressed in one word, true prayer is "surrender". The long public prayer usually contains matter that should be given in the sermon.

Even adults may at times do strange things when childishly motivated by the spirit of imitation. A cheerful Christian worker who lived in the mountains, wife of a sheepman, told me one day that she had always been fascinated by the stories of people who had spent an entire night in prayer. "I thought it would be nice to try it myself," she said, "but I always fell asleep." Poised and serene, she had no problems that demanded long seasons of prayer.

Due to his consciousness of the nearness of God, Jesus made another contribution to dynamic prayer. To the average Jew of Jesus' day, as is true of too many Christians of our day, God was a distant, far-off Deity. Jesus' own feeling toward God is beautifully expressed in the oft-quoted words of a modern poet:

"Closer is He than breathing,
Nearer than hands or feet."

And so Jesus taught his followers how to pray to the God who is very near.

I have already intimated how Jesus differed from the religionists of his time who

thought God ought to be informed. Neither did he try to wheedle God into action. With the confidence of a son who has never been deceived by his father, he lived the life of prayer. It was true of him as was said of Francis of Assisi, "he himself was prayer."

A preacher from America accompanied by a friend was walking in front of a heathen temple when he was suddenly startled by a clashing clamor and a loud, jangling noise. "What is that?" he exclaimed. The friend explained that it was time for worship in the temple and the priests were waking up their god so he would be ready. Jesus taught that the transcendent God not only is near, but he also is unfailingly attentive and wholly adequate.

oooOooo

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT

It isn't far to Bethlehem's town,
It's anywhere that the Lord comes down
And finds in a person's friendly face
A welcome and abiding place.
The road to Bethlehem runs right through
The hearts of folks like me and you!

-- *Author Unknown.*

oooOooo

We make much of seasons and of holidays and of fleeting occasions. We make much of the year's ending and the year's beginning, as though the stroke of midnight, by some strange alchemy, transformed the world and all the Universe. But with all the changing times and seasons there are in the Heavens those things which change not and are Eternal.

These are the things that cause the world to keep its balance and cause men to return to moderation, despite the strange doctrines, false teachings, and fantastic schemes that trouble this age and generation.

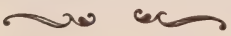
-- *Author Unknown.*

* * *

SEASON OF LIGHT

This is the time and season of
the year
When darkness lays her mantle
on the land.
And every home in countries
far and near
Sends out its light, a friendly
welcome hand
To help each person safely through
the night
And blaze a pathway through all
fear and doubt.
Just as the homeward beacons
burn so bright
The torch of Freedom we see
shining out,
To show the world a peaceful
day.
If Brotherhood and Love will
rule each heart,
To teach mankind a gentle kindly
way.
For Love and Truth are Light's
great counterpart.
So light your candles, let their
flame be birth
Of Goodwill to all men and
Peace on Earth.

-- Zelma Dennis.



Light is the symbol of truth— *Lowell.*

oooOooo

CHRISTMAS IN GREECE

By—

Bennie Caroline Hall

Easter is pernaps the most important religious holiday in Greece — a country where religious holidays predominate. Then, the streets are filled with long processions, each participant - and even the sidewalk spectator - carrying a tall lighted candle in commemoration of Him who said: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness." The air is filled with the chant of priests and songs of praise to a risen Lord.

Like Easter, the beginning of Christmas Day, on some of the Greek islands, is marked with special religious processions. Priests and congregations emerge from churches after the midnight service, the priest swinging his censer aloft, the people following. The belief is that as the hour of Jesus' birth approaches, the heavens open and a host of angels descends to bless the earth, and that upon all present Divine grace will be bestowed.

Christmas on the mainland, however, is observed in a much less spectacular way. It is, more or less, a family and church affair. The holiday season extends over a period of twelve days, from Christmas Eve to Epiphany, January 6th.

Prior to that, the devout observe a strict fast for six weeks, abstaining from animal foods of all kind, including milk. This fast is broken upon returning from midnight mass early Christmas morning, when the various families refresh themselves with wine and eat the Christmas sweets which have been prepared the week before. Tables are laden with seasonal fruits and the traditional Christmas loaf, — "Christopsomo"—a sweet, rich bread filled with almonds and candied fruits, with the name "Jesus Christ" written on top, in Greek.

Early on Christmas morning little boys go from house to house singing Greek Christmas carols; small iron bars shaped into triangles and struck with a large nail or piece of metal provide a rhythmic accompaniment. The most popular of these carols is about Saint Vasilios, whom the Greek children look upon as their Santa Claus.

Presents are exchanged among intimate friends, relatives and children, and on New Year's Day neighbors and friends exchange small cakes called

"vassilopita", as well as holiday greetings. This is an old Greek custom which we "visiting" Americans also observe, in deference to our hosts and out of respect for their beliefs and traditions.

A holiday custom, novel to Americans, is the practice of placing packages containing goods, wines, cakes, etc., around the traffic officers' stands or platforms. These items, tokens of appreciation for services rendered during the year, are later taken to the police stations where they are divided among all policemen. The various squares in Athens, where the gifts around traffic stands often reach enormous proportions, present a colorful and picturesque sight around Christmas time.

Christmas, as it is known to us of the West — with its gay cards, tinsel-trimmed trees and red-coated, bewhiskered Santa Clauses — is not celebrated by the Greeks. A casual visitor to Athens, however, could easily persuade himself that this statement is not true. Flower vendors display holly and mistletoe, even Christmas wreaths; shop windows feature figures of Santa Claus, tree ornaments and such. But these, with the exception of mistletoe, are not of Greek origin.

We Americans whose "home away from home" is, presently, Greece, observe Christmas much in the same manner that we do at home. Usually there are inter-denominational services at the American Club here in Kifissia. (The Athens suburbs where most of the Americans live.) There is also a handsome Christmas tree, with simple gifts for all the children.

We have our own Christmas trees at home—sometimes a real one brought from Germany or some other place where trees are plentiful. But just as often our tree is a make-it-yourself affair, or an artificial one bought at a local "magazine" — or shop.

As a rule we make our own Christmas gifts, using whatever materials we find available. We have our Christmas dinners at home, utilizing the materials at hand. Sometimes, the main dish is turkey — frozen in the states and sent over. But it is more likely to be chicken, or the succulent lamb which is so plentiful - and so delicious - in these parts. We try to maintain the spirit of Christmas by sharing whatever blessings we have with the less fortunate—and there are many in Greece. In that way, we manage to achieve a sense of peace and good-will, whatever the circumstances or wherever we happen to be.

CHRISTMAS IN PAKISTAN

By Miriam Benade

The weather is crisp, the nights are cold and sparkling. As nights and days take their turn you think of silver and gold—the silver of night stars and gold of sun. The poinsettia hedge glows with vivid red flowers; the rose bushes are still asleep, but here and there the bravest buds are opening out. On the Mall, flower venders have begun to sell bunches of sweet smelling narcissus. In the garland shops, coils of yellow and orange colored marigolds lie waiting to be bought for some festive occasion.

Out in the country great stands of sugar cane contrast with the paler green of the young wheat just coming up. Rows of mustard plants and dal add their beauty. It is December! In your heart you know it is the Christmas Season. You are not wishing for snow to come down softly to remind you of this as you look up to the vivid blue sky. You wonder if in Palestine it is very much like all this. You watch people around you everywhere. What do they know of your thoughts and the preparations for Christmas that have begun in many parts of the world?

The little boy riding lazily on the back of the big awkward buffalo, driving the village flock out on to the plain doesn't know about the Saviour; the little girl swinging along in the narrow alley with her baby brother on her hip has not heard of the baby Jesus.

True, in crowded Anarkali there is extra bustle as shopkeepers remind each other that Christian parents will be coming to buy Christmas gifts for their children. Stalls are big and little, and the bigger places look most resplendent. To those who sell, Christmas means more money and little else.

But go to the Christian schools and to the churches. Activity everywhere! Carols old once more are being lovingly dusted off for use again; carols new are being prepared. One language is not enough to express Christmas joy. Learn your carols in English and Punjabi, and Hindi as well as in Urdu. Tell and retell the precious Christmas story; repeat the lovely legends and

MEDITATION

Lahore, West Pakistan

poems; practice dramas and pageants; prepare the costumes and decorations, for Christmas is coming! Piles of Christmas cards appear. They have been arriving all year from over seas; who cares if someone else has already used them? Their gayety or dignity and loveliness have not been spoiled by the signature of a distant stranger, for the children who clasp them to their little hearts.

Oranges and pomegranates, apples and almonds and raisins, glistening jalebis and creamy pera, fruit cake—some are thinking of these. Some are knitting, some are sewing bright garments, some are looking for toys or books. But many are doing nothing of this sort.

Back in that dingy low room from which a weary woman has just come, the earthen jar where flour is kept, is almost empty. There is little else except a bed heaped with rags and a smouldering fire surrounded by a few earthenware pots. Over in Gulbarg where the bungalows are large and airy the ladies are planning what to do next with their many things. Do they know about Christmas?

Invitations begin to arrive. Come here! Come there! We are having our annual Christmas function—you must come! You go as you can. You hear all the Christmas hymns, over and over, but never too often. You see hosts of angels, large and small; you see flocks of 'sheep' with faces strangely human and starry eyed. Their shepherds are busy tending them and keeping their gay blankets in place. The wise men clothed in oriental splendor come bearing gifts. Bearded Joseph is present, not very tall but always duly solemn; and Mary gentle and lovely in her blue dopatta scarf. And there is the charani, the manger, where they say baby Jesus lay after his birth.

Into the school courtyard crowd the mothers who want to see their children having a share in the Christmas program. Up on the roof tops, surrounding the school, other women have gathered to see and hear all that is happening in the courtyard.

Out in the alleyways carelessly passing, are all those who know nothing about what is being celebrated inside the courtyard of the school.

Soft lights pour out of the Anglican Cathedral doors welcoming folk to enter and sit

quietly to hear the music of the organ and watch the rich pageant of the birth of Jesus. The observers' hearts and minds are filled with a sense of mystery and awe and reverence.

Days have swiftly passed, everywhere Christian groups have been making ready to observe the Birthday; their Muslim friends in schools and colleges have shared in the happy experience. Now it is Christmas eve! In Western homes the Christmas tree stands ready and lighted. Who cares if the tree is not a fir? Its magic speaks anyway to the eager heart of the little child looking at all the glow and brightness. Over the radio comes a Christmas program planned and shared by all the Christian groups. In each house there are many comings and goings. As midnight approaches, singers arrive for caroling accompanied by the beating of a dholak drum and the rhythmic clatter of a long pair of tongs. The joyful noise has arrived at your front door,- bring out a pile of oranges or fistfulls of reorie candies. There are processions,- nurse with candles, villagers, school children.

Out in the darkness move figures who do not enter into this happiness.

Christmas morning! Come to Naulakha Church, join the throng. If you are early you get a seat inside; otherwise you sit with the rest of the crowd on the matting spread outside. No pipe organ music here; the singing is accompanied by an orchestra of Indo-Pakistan instruments—harmoniums, sitars, dil rubas, flutes, violins and tablas. Twenty babies are baptized. What day is more fitting for this sacred ceremony than the birthday of the baby Jesus! Now it is time for the final hymn. The great congregation rises. In a burst of glorious celebration the favorite Christmas ghazal in Punjabi is chanted—

"Aya Isa yar sade pas. . . . . ."

Jesus our friend has come to us,
He shows his face,
Hearken, the angels sing!. . .

The stanzas roll on.

Whose friend is Jesus? Does He really show His face to all? People embrace each other. They say, "Christmas be blessed to you." Then rejoicing they leave for home. Some go out to give gospel portions to Muslim friends and passersby; some join village congregations; some welcome friends. All day long the excitement and the glory continue. As twilight changes to night and the beautiful panoply of Christmas skies unrolls on the dome of the Naulakha Church, the light-

cross shines out
ed over the brooding city, speaking silently of Christ the Lord born in the City of David centuries ago.

It is night; the very last visitor has gone. You sit quietly looking at the lighted Christmas tree glowing in the darkness of the familiar room. At last you pause to remember other Christmases and loved children and others. Thoughts which have been undercurrent all day, all week, all month are expressed aloud. Now you put out the lights on the tree but not those in your heart. Those must be lit every day throughout the year. Silently your heart prays—

Oh Holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us we pray,
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born in us today.

PRAYER:

God and Father, Who art the foundation of living waters, we thirst for Thy blessing. Amid the anxieties of our day we seek the firm foundation of faith. While all things change, Thou alone changest not. Lift our hearts upward unto Thee in understanding and perfect love, that we make Thy law our delight, a lamp unto our feet, a light unto our path. Open our hearts outward toward our fellowmen in sympathy, that we may be strong to do what in us lies to carry forward our mission of justice, peace and humility. Make us to join hands, in Thy name and in accordance with Thy word, with all men of whatever creed, of whatever nation, of whatever race, in the building of Thy kingdom, whose name is Brotherhood. Make us to be strong to do Thy will, building one world for one humanity under the One Everliving God. Amen.

-- Rabbi Edward E. Klein.

DISCUSSING CHRISTMAS GIFTS

By W. J. Thompson, D.D.

Now here is a topic that interests everyone! We are all intrigued by certain mysterious movements as Christmas approaches!

Up to this time of the year we felt perfectly free to move around our place of abode entering various rooms, freely examining anything that attracted our attention.

But with the nearness of Christmas we seem to feel a certain indefinable restraint! It is not so easy to move about. Doors that were left open are closed—and locked!

When a knock comes to the door—or the telephone rings—we start to answer the summons, but others swiftly respond, and we never manage to get there first!

Packages arrive, and strangely disappear, and any inquiry about such items is apparently of little avail!

Of course we are curious, but we have learned that the period just before Christmas is a wonderful time to practice the virtues of patience and silence!

When Christmas morning dawns, we gather before the Christmas tree to discover that patience has its reward, and silence gives way to sounds of joy at the glad surprises hidden on the Christmas tree, some of them bearing our name.

Now all this leads us to the subject of Christmas gifts! We often hear the expression at this time of the year, "It is so difficult to know just what to give this year."

The Bible has an answer for this, as for your other problems. It is found in Luke 11-41: "Give such things as ye have."

For example—Give *APPRECIATION*—and pay your generous comments and quick recognition of others. Make many happy. ("Nothing makes people so worthy of compliments as occasionally receiving them.")

There isn't any danger in
Kindly things you say,
There isn't any sorrow in
a fine, helpful deed!
No sad regret awaits you
at the end of the day
When by appreciation you
help a friend in need!

Another gift that is welcomed eagerly is *COURAGE!* All around us are people who are discouraged because of many things: difficulties and disappointments, and disillusionments of various kinds.

You bestow a marvelous and valuable gift when you give a man or woman new *COURAGE.*

One tells "the pessimist is one who sees a difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist is one who sees an opportunity in every difficulty."

If you can help one fearful soul
To find courage again,
And face with confidence
Life's goal—
You have not lived in vain!

It is very delightful at Christmas time to receive lovely gifts packed in beautiful boxes, but such gifts cannot be compared in value and significance with the shining gifts of sympathy and understanding for those who face sorrow at Christmas time!

You do not need material wealth to help such people. All you need is a genuine desire to uplift them, plus the insight that thoughtfulness bestows.

Pray that God will help you make Christmas memorable for some sorrowing soul because you gave him the gift of strength through sympathy, and sweetness through understanding and affection.

When you become God's messenger to a troubled heart, and give gladness in place of grief — triumph instead of tears — then you have reason to thank the Lord for such a wonderful privilege; you are giving valuable Christmas gifts to those who know how to appreciate your gifts.

Yes, Christmas and giving go together!
God gave his son. The angels gave their tidings.
The Shepherds gave adoration.
The Wise Men gave their treasures.
And we all can give something to others, and
Find the joy of Christmas in giving!

Remember, the great question is, not how much do you have in your purse—but, how much do you have in your heart?

One tells us, "hardening of the sympathies is a far more devastating disease than hardening of the arteries, for sympathies are the arteries of the soul!"

Give, generously, this Christmas!

Take a little bit of Christmas
To the neighbor at your side
Who upon the waves of fortune
Long ago has ceased to ride!
Do not be a miser hoarding
Cheer, and hope, and power to bless;
Share these gifts with someone near you,
Who such wealth does not possess!
'Tis not the amount of money,
It is your eagerness to bless;
The friendly word, the warm handshake—
These can give real happiness!
So, friend, put the Christmas spirit
Into everything you do;
Give someone a Happy Christmas—
You'll have Christmas all year through!

THE ETERNAL LIGHT

[Editor's note:

We join with all people of goodwill in extending best wishes to those who celebrate "The Festival of Light"—(Hanukkah).

Through the courtesy of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, we present this article which, we believe, has real meaning for everyone.]

* * *

A candle is a small thing.

But one candle can light another.

And as it gives its flame to the other, see how its own light...increases!

You are such a light.

Light is the power to dispel darkness.

You have this power to move back the darkness in yourself and in others—with the birth of light created when one mind illuminates another, when one heart kindles another, when one man strengthens another.

And its flame, also, enlarges within you as you pass it on.

Throughout history children of darkness have tried to smother this passage of light from man to man. Throughout history dictators, large and small, have tried to darken, diminish and separate men by force.

But always in the end they fail.

For always somewhere in the world the light remains; ready to burn its brightest where it is dark; a light that began when God created the world:

"...Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment..."

And every free people has remained free by resisting those who would extinguish in men the light of freedom, of love, of truth.

To do our daily part to increase this light, we must remember that a candle alone is a small thing, a man alone is a small thing, a nation alone is a small thing.

Remembering this, we must recognize something much more than our indispensability to others. We must also remember their indispensability to us.

For how can we hope—either as individuals or nations—to reach our maximum until we help those around us reach theirs?

to be strong, the strong must serve.

* * *

"These lights we now kindle..."

These words accompany the lighting of Hanukkah candles in the home, and in the heart, to commemorate the eternal bridge of light which reaches from Creation itself to the radiant spirit of free men.

In this spirit is celebrated the Festival of Hanukkah—the Festival of Light—wherein the candle that *gives* its light to the others is called *"the servant candle."*

You, too, are strongest. . . when you serve.

THE REALITY OF LIGHT

(Observed by Dorothy H. Holl)

Late at night one lies in his pitch-dark bedroom. Not even a twinkle of starlight finds its way through the clouds to send a cheering beam in the window. The darkness seems very real. Instinctively the hand of the nocturnal ponderer gropes for the switch, finds it; and the room is flooded with light. Where has the darkness gone? Has it retreated through the windows? Hardly. Has it drawn itself into the closet? Not at all. It never was. It was nothingness. It was the absence of light.

Perhaps one day tired humanity, groping in Stygian gloom, will find the switch to flood the world with tolerance and kindness. Then it will learn that the words, "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you," constitute not an empty platitude, but the fundamental law of life.

If the reality that is light can prove the nothingness of darkness, is it not equally true that justice may sometime wipe out injustice, that freedom may burst the bonds of those people who are enslaved, that the brotherhood of man may destroy suspicion and hatred?

oooOooo

In Memoriam

AE'LIS CHURCHILL CHAPHE

Ae'lis, your gentle spirit's shining sight
Was like a true crusader for the light
Of poetry to shine within a world
Where darkened fears had for so long unfurled.
We warm our hearts with all your beautiful words.
Your courage set our souls in upward surge.
Your life a radiant flame to show the way
That we must take to find God's peaceful day.

--Zelma Dennis.

* * *

Our beloved poetess, friend and advisor died on October 19th in Cortland, New York, where she had made her home since 1948.

Born in Pueble, New York, in 1872, Ae'lis Churchill spent her early life in Homer and Onondaga and finished her education at the University in Vermillion, South Dakota.

In February, 1923, she married Vincent Chaphe.

Mrs. Chaphe was a member of the Vermillion Woman's Club, Art Club and Nautilus Club, the Cortland County Historical Society, American Poetry Fellowship Society, National League of American Pen Women, American Poetry League, National Amateur Press Association, Poets Haven, Iowa Poetry Day Association, Ohio Verse Writers Guild, Sigma Iota XI Fraternity and the Eugene Field Society.

Mrs. Chaphe became interested in Fellowship in Prayer in its early days, becoming an advisor in 1952. We are all familiar with her inspiring poems. Even though partially handicapped, she did much toward furthering the work.

The following, written by her sometime ago, was read at the funeral service—

"It shall not be said that I am dead
When flowers above me their fragrance shed,
And filtered light through stained glass lays
Across my face while the organ plays...
Where I shall go? What I shall do, or see?
I know not the answer! God holds the key
And the lock it fits, He knows, not I...
I only know I shall not die,
Just be transferred to another sphere.
And if as fair as the one seen here
I shall be fully satisfied...
Knowing I never really died."

* * *

P R A Y E R:

Our Father who art in Heaven, open our minds and hearts to the message of the angels at this season of the year.

May we hear them say to us, "Peace on earth, good will among men."

May we hear them say to us as individuals, "For unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour which is Christ, the Lord."

May the love and redemptive spirit of the Christ-Child be born within our hearts.

May Thy message of love and peace and good will find a welcome in the hearts and minds of men everywhere; that peace may reign throughout the earth and brotherhood prevail among men of every race and clan and class and creed.

Give us the will to receive Thy gift of redemptive love.

Give us the spirit to share Thy love with those who know Thee not.

May our sharing of Thy love be the means by which men may recognize Thy Fatherhood and in Thy Fatherhood may they realize their brotherhood; that peace and good will among all men may become, in our time, both a prayed for goal and a world saving reality.

Set our hearts to the obedience of Thy commandments.

May we, with the Prophet of old, do that which is just, love mercy and kindness and walk humbly with Thee, our Lord and our Redeemer. Amen.

--Anon.

oooOcoo

IRENE HULBERT—

A NEW ADVISOR

It is with gratitude that Fellowship in Prayer adds the name of Miss Irene Hulbert to its group of advisors in the Eastern Zone.

Miss Hulbert is primarily interested in the general welfare and spiritual development of children everywhere. She gives generously of her talents and special training in this direction. Fellowship in Prayer cannot help but be enriched by her far-reaching efforts.

In accepting the appointment as an advisor, Miss Hulbert writes, "I feel most humble to be chosen...and it is with hope and faith that there may be many ways in which I may serve this great purpose..."

We are quite certain there will be many!

We welcome Miss Hulbert!

* * *

APPRECIATION

To our everfaithful and loyal Contributing Editors we extent sincere and humble gratitude for their wholehearted cooperation, especially during this difficult year. For their contributions to this Christmas number, we are eternally grateful — and to all others who have had a share in making this issue of FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER possible, particularly the following—

THE NETWORK OF THE LORD	*By Adeline Hollister Veghte.*
EVERY PRAYER I PRAY IS BEARING FRUIT	*(Sent by Rev. Frederick J. Compson).*
SEASON OF LIGHT	*By Zelma Dennis.*
CHRISTMAS IN GREECE	*By Bennie Caroline Hall.*
CHRISTMAS IN PAKISTAN— A MEDITATION	*By Miriam Benade.*
PRAYER	*By Rabbi Edward E. Klein.*
THE ETERNAL LIGHT	*The Jewish Theological Seminary.*
THE REALITY OF LIGHT	*(Sent by Dorothy H. Holl).*
LORD, LIGHT THE CANDLES	*By Grace Noll Crowell.*
The Vignettes	*By La Verne Moritz.*

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NOTICES and COMMENTS

PRAYER GROUP IN INDIA. From the sponsor of a prayer group in India, we have received a most interesting message of the devotion and benefits to be derived from prayer. Space will not presently permit us to include much of this message. It may be possible in the future to quote more in detail from the work and thoughts of this able contributor, whose interest we prize.

THIS WORLD OF OURS — and it IS our world but before that it is God's. Let us see it as such and have faith.

Against the chaos which exists today in men's aims and acts let us keep close to God in constant prayer that each may do his part in God's name; that each may individually love more and condemn less; that each may give freely of his confidence and strength for support of God's simple laws—which men so distort.

Let us commune constantly with God, trusting always. Pray more and have less to say! It is both the least AND the most that we can do.

This is the purpose of Fellowship in Prayer.

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER. The publication is printed bi-monthly and the subscription rate is $2.00 per year.

* * *

Our sincere gratitude and appreciation go out to all who, in this past year, have, in any way, supported our efforts to sustain, improve, and extend the work of Fellowship in Prayer. To all those—our trustees, advisors, contributing editors, our volunteer workers and our printers, whose support has been truly noble, we offer humble thanks. Words cannot express the depth of our feeling for the friendly cooperation and unselfish interest shown in the furtherance of this work.

To each and all of you, Merry Christmas! And may the light of the Christmas Star illumine your pathway with love, joy and peace throughout the coming year, bringing rich and unexpected blessings!

✠ ✠ ✠

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LORD, LIGHT THE CANDLES

Lord, light the Christmas candles on the earth.
Once more let waiting wicks leap high with flame;
Let burdened hearts recapture their lost mirth
Remembering the night the Christ Child came.
Lord, may the wan and frightened children turn
With joy to watch thy lighted candles burn.

Old wars have darkened earth so very long.
Earth's windows went ungarlanded - no tree
Bore gold and silver fruitage, and no song
Rang out as lifted carolings to thee.
This Christmas may the whole world find its voice,
And may the lands, so long repressed, rejoice.

Oh, may the goodwill heralded that night
Still ring across the centuries - may men
Face heavenward to catch the radiant light
That truly shines as clearly now as then.
And blessed Lord, may wars forever cease
Beneath the Christ Child's benison of peace.

-- Grace Noll Crowell.

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